

All in for Kids

A Birth to 3 Program Family Newsletter

All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program is a newsletter created to keep you and your family informed about the services available through the Birth to 3 Program. The newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.



Empathy and young children

The Birth to 3 Program supports your family in helping the child grow and develop in all areas, including social-emotional development. One part of social-emotional development is the ability to show empathy. Empathy means being able to understand and care about someone else's feelings.

Why empathy is important

Empathy is a basis for positive interactions with others. It is a foundation of strong relationships. An empathetic child is better able to manage their emotions, settle conflicts in a respectful and peaceful way, and take responsibility for their actions. This benefits the child, family, and community.

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Tips for helping children develop empathy

Around age 2, the child's developing brain gains the ability to show empathy. Parents and caregivers can help the child practice this skill. Some ways to help the child develop empathy include:

- Helping the child recognize and name common feelings like happiness, sadness, frustration, and anger. You can look for chances to do this in daily life, such as "Your sister is feeling sad because she lost her toy."
- Setting an example with acts of kindness toward others. For example, hold the door for someone whose hands are full and explain to the child why you are doing it.
- Using empathetic language such as "I understand this is hard for you" or "You're disappointed that we can't go to the park because it's raining."
- Looking at body language or facial expressions to see how someone is feeling. You can help the child practice with simple activities such as cutting out pictures of faces from a magazine or making faces in front of a mirror and having the child name the emotion shown.
- Reading books about feelings such as "How Are You Peeling? Foods with Moods" by Saxton Freymann or watching videos like this one from Sesame Street: [wisconsin.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/sesame-mark-ruffalo-empathy/mark-ruffalo-empathy-sesame-street/](https://www.wisconsin.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/sesame-mark-ruffalo-empathy/mark-ruffalo-empathy-sesame-street/).

When families teach empathy, children learn to:

- Build relationships.
- Act with compassion and understanding.
- Think about the similarities among people of all ethnic backgrounds, races, and income levels.
- Make choices throughout life that treat others as equal.

The Birth to 3 Program supports your family and child based on individual needs. Talk to the service team if you would like to learn more about nurturing empathy.

Transitioning out of the Birth to 3 Program

Children can participate in the Birth to 3 Program until their third birthday. While some children stay in the program until they turn 3, others leave sooner. No matter what age the child is when they leave the Birth to 3 Program, every family is provided with support in transitioning out of the program.

After the child leaves the Birth to 3 Program, they may no longer need supports or services. If they do, those continued supports might come from

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several places. It could be from family members or friends, through the local school district, or from community or other early childhood programs. The child may also qualify for supports and services through a program such as the Children's Long-Term Support (CLTS) Waiver Program. (Some children participate in the Birth to 3 Program and the CLTS Waiver Program at the same time. These children can continue in the CLTS Waiver Program after they leave the Birth to 3 Program.)

Transition planning

Planning for transition can help your family continue to get the supports and services it needs when your time in the Birth to 3 Program ends. The Birth to 3 Program team (which includes you, as parents or caregivers) will talk about transitioning out of the program. Think about questions and concerns you want to bring up with the service coordinator. Together the team will create a written plan with next steps you can take when the child leaves the program.

Special education services through the local school district

If the child is close to 3 years old, Birth to 3 Program staff will determine if they may be eligible for services through the local school district. (The term you may hear used by program staff is "potentially eligible for local education agency (LEA) services.") If eligible, the child can begin receiving services through the school district at age 3. They do not need to wait until they start 4K or kindergarten.

If the child is not determined to be "potentially eligible for LEA (school district) services" or you do not want the child to receive school district services, Birth to 3 Program staff can support your family in other ways. You can be connected with other agencies or programs (for example, Head Start, the library, a family resource center, or a support group). We can also help arrange other supports and services, such as private therapy, to support the child's development.

The goal is for the transition process to go smoothly. Conversations and decisions about transitioning out of the Birth to 3 Program can be brought up at any time—just ask!

Routine vaccinations are important for children

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, families have been staying at home to stay safe. Many people have skipped health care checkups.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The CLTS Waiver Program provides services for children with developmental, physical, or emotional disabilities.

For more information about this program or if you have questions, talk to the Birth to 3 Program service coordinator or go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/family/index.htm.

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Because of this, some children have missed routine childhood vaccinations (also called “immunizations”). Parents and caregivers should keep children up to date on vaccinations to help prevent certain dangerous diseases. These diseases can be very serious, even deadly, especially for young children. Vaccination is one of the best ways to protect babies and children from these diseases. Go to www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html for more information about routine childhood vaccinations.

Vaccinations for babies and young children

From birth to 24 months old, babies need vaccinations to protect against diseases such as hepatitis B, chicken pox, whooping cough, measles, and many more. Health care providers keep track of the vaccinations a child has received. If a child is due for a vaccination, the health care provider should offer it at a checkup appointment. If you have any questions about vaccinations the child needs, ask the health care provider.

You can visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/less-stressful.html to learn about simple ways to make vaccinations easier for babies and young children.

Additional vaccination information

You can visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ Childhood and Adolescent Vaccine Information and Schedules webpage at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/childhood.htm to find out more about routine childhood vaccinations.

Moms-to-be, new mothers, and caregivers can go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/txt4baby.htm to sign up for the Text4Baby program. This a free service that texts health care information during pregnancy and the baby’s first year, including vaccine schedules and health care appointment reminders.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website contains more information about vaccinations, including:

- Answers to frequently asked questions about childhood immunizations at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/tools/parents-guide/parents-guide-part4.html.
- Vaccine safety information at www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/caregivers/faqs.html.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many health care providers keep vaccination records on the online Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR). These records are private medical information that can be read only by parents or guardians. To learn how to view WIR records of vaccinations a child has had and that they need, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/wir.htm.

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Helpful resources for families

Ways to help toddlers develop empathy:

www.zerotothree.org/resources/5-how-to-help-your-child-develop-empathy

Five important reasons to vaccinate children:

www.vaccines.gov/get-vaccinated/for_parents/five_reasons

Information about catching up on missed childhood vaccinations:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/catchup.html

Latest information about COVID-19 in Wisconsin, including vaccine information:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm

Information about the Birth to 3 Program:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/birthto3/family/index.htm

Previous issues of All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program newsletters:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3.htm

Information about the Children's Long-Term Support Waiver Program:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/family/index.htm

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

For faster delivery, sign up to receive the electronic version of this newsletter and other emails about the Birth to 3 Program. Go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aboutdhs/alerts.htm, then scroll down and click the "Birth to 3 Program Information for Families" link on the left side.

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All in for Kids: Birth to 3 Program is a newsletter published by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for children and families in the Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program.

The Wisconsin Birth to 3 Program is an early intervention program committed to serving children under the age of 3 with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. The program partners with families to assist the child's development and support the family's knowledge, skills, and abilities as they interact with and raise their child. For more information, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/index.htm.

Para leer este boletín en español, visite www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3.htm.

Xav nyeem tsab ntaavv xov xwm no ua Lus Mev, mus xyuas www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/akidsb-3.htm.

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